# THE NEW REPUBLIC

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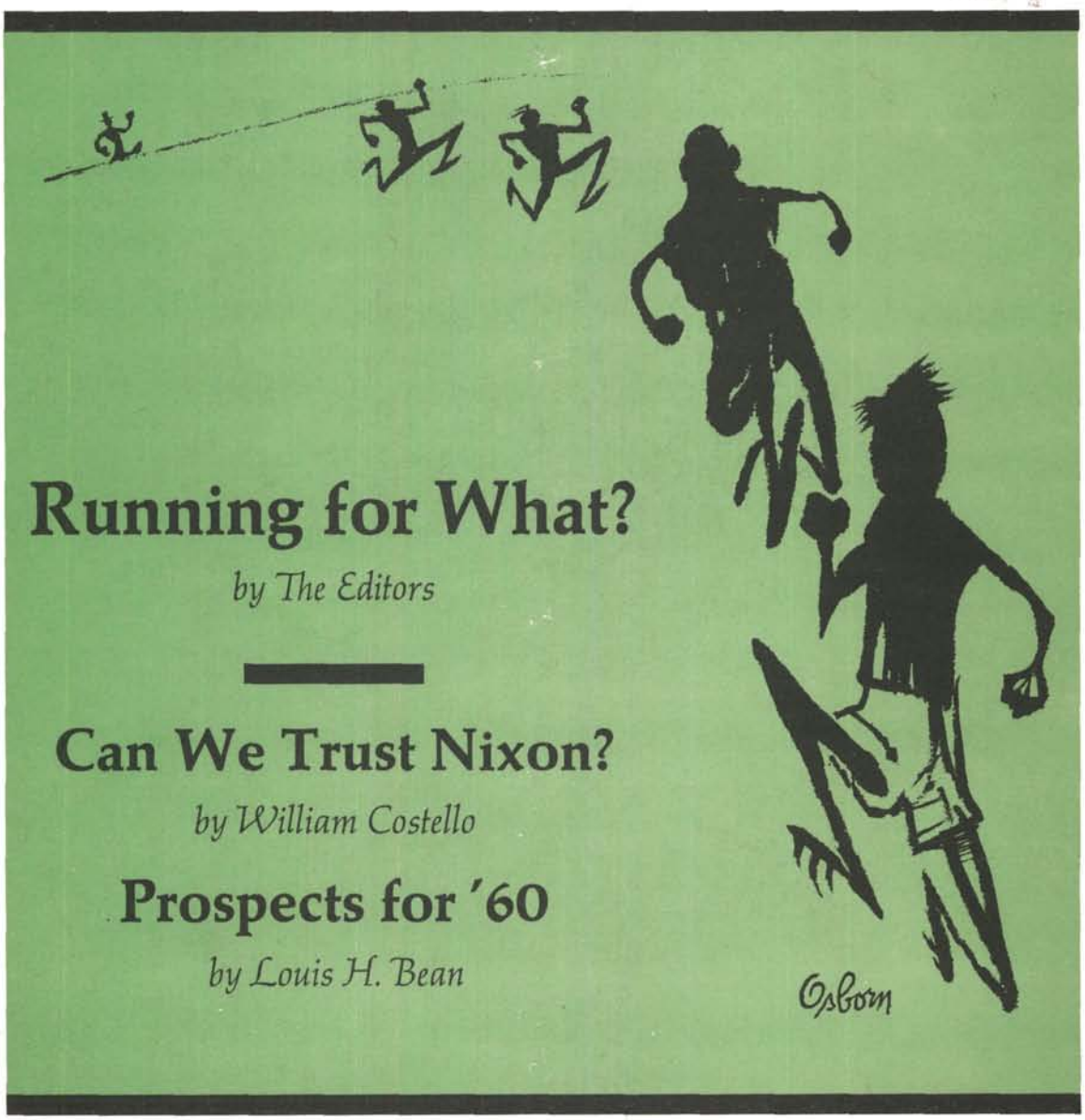


## Running for What?

*by The Editors*

## Can We Trust Nixon?

*by William Costello*

## Prospects for '60

*by Louis H. Bean*

*January 4, 1960, 25 cents*

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# T.R.B. *from Washington*

*The New Year*

★ Often, things don't happen the way they are supposed to, but at least here is the general thinking of Washington on the eve of the new session of Congress. The session won't accomplish much. This is not from want of urgent problems but from circumstances.

Take Eisenhower: In his budget message he will say that the budget must be balanced; in his economic message he will say that economy is booming if we just practice retrenchment; in his State of the Union message (delivered in person) he will tell Congress to do a whole lot of things – provide better schools, reduce the farm surplus, clean up the slums, increase civil rights and so on, but not to spend any money; and he will wind up saying that God-fearing America is surpassing atheistic Communism – and if it isn't, at least things are getting better and tension is being reduced. That will leave most people in a fine glow, and there won't be an editorial page in the country that won't say Eisenhower means well. Which is true.

Take Congress: It will be a short session so that members can get away before the July conventions; probably it will adjourn early in June. This just about gives time to pass the appropriation bills. Congress has big Democratic majorities, but these don't really mean much. The Southern conservatives don't want reform bills or radical legislation passed any more than the Republicans, and with a veto on their side they probably won't be passed. Furthermore, the Johnson-Rayburn leadership still, apparently, believes in me-tooism. Majority Leader Johnson will get out his own annual "State of the Union" message. Last year it was a fine eloquent document, written by able persons. But there wasn't much follow-up, and there is little expectation that there will be any this year.

*Personal Diplomacy*

★ Finally, 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue may have a "Back Early" placard hanging on the front door for most of the year up to July. Eisenhower likes to be liked, and he commands an ovation in any foreign country. Trips to Latin America, to the Orient, back to Paris: he may well be coming and going as much as Dulles now that he has taken over "personal diplomacy."

As we say, our crystal ball may be cloudy but that's the outlook as it is seen here.

*And Another New Year*

★ While we're about it why stop here – let's go on to 1961. One thing we see after the elections in any case is the return of two-party government, and high time too. If the Democrats win, you have two-party government instantly, with the massed press in opposition. That would be fine. Or if Nixon should win: he is the one man who would unite the Democrats; at last they would have a President they could attack. (One of them in a poisoned mood the other day suggested a title for a new biography of Nixon – "Up from Knavery.")

Finally, suppose Rockefeller should be drafted. If our estimate is right, he is a couple of steps to the left of Roosevelt. (After all, times have changed, remember; most politicians today are picking up where FDR left off.) Opposition – ? Sure, it would come from the Republicans, just as opposition to Teddy Roosevelt came from the Republicans, and you have to read accounts of those days to realize how savage it was.

So that is our happy thought for the holiday season; a lot of discomfort for a lot of people. Discomfort because problems swept under the rug will emerge again; discomfort because it is always hard to think for yourself. How happy the nation has been for eight years; how longingly it will look back to this golden age – America's Second Era of Good Feeling! Well, we just can't wait.

A.D. 1960, incidentally, will be our first half-trillion dollar year. Gross National Product for 1959 (estimated) – $479 billion; in 1960 – $507 billion. This cracks the half-way mark, and we can begin talking about "trillions," a number defined by Webster as having 12 zeros in English notation, and not to be confused with "trillium" which is a genus of herbs.

*A Steel Settlement*

★ Eisenhower has painted himself into a corner on the steel controversy: his constant emphasis on "inflation" makes settlement difficult. Feeling here is that management is losing the tug-of-war and that it will now accept any mandate where it can blame somebody else – in this case probably the White House if wages are raised. Administration labor advisers privately make their views known: Eisenhower should pressure management for a settlement like Kaiser's or like that in the aluminum tinplate industries. Did anybody call those settlements "inflationary"? No, there is not a whisper of it though the terms are about what McDonald is asking in steel.

*Which Column Do You Read?*

★ The *New York Times* called the Eisenhower trip "thrilling," "deeply moving" – changing "the international climate" and giving "the West the initiative for peace." *Time* says it lifted our "national influence to new highs" and that he (Eisenhower) "argued adamantly" with France. Yes, said the *Times*, "Ike's trip . . . made it clear that the West would be dealing at the Summit from a new kind of strength."

But, read the columnists: *NYTimes*-man C. L. Sulzberger (the day after the *Times'* paean) says de Gaulle "implacably insisted on his views" and his was a "singular triumph"; American policy, he charged, has shifted from "hard," to "soft" to "hard" again.

Marquis Childs writes that everybody in Paris won a prize "except President Eisenhower and the US." If Eisenhower used his "vast prestige" to enhance the American position, "it was not visible to the naked eye."

Contradictory? Not really; they are writing about different concepts. Eisenhower did carry a transparent image of US goodwill and peacefulness: a nice thing. But to support it with deeds and diplomacy, ah, that is another matter.

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# Running for What?

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*Cartoon*

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The withdrawal of Rockefeller astonished no one who views politics realistically. Men in practical politics are there to win, not to lead forlorn hopes. True, there were moments when the Governor seemed to be striking a new note, perhaps even to be raising a new tune. Some thought they heard him singing: "I read it in the story book, that, for to kiss his dear,/Leander swam the Hellespont – and I will swim this here"; but now Rockefeller has announced that he will not go near the water. Not for the time being.

For his personal political future the decision is no doubt sensible. Without risking probable defeat for the nomination, he can function at whatever level and degree of closeness he chooses should a Nixon Administration come to power, and still be eligible by age to run on his own in 1968. In a strictly partisan sense, his decision is bad news for the Democrats. Regardless of the expressions of pleasure that Nixon will be their opponent, Democratic leaders know that the Republican Party will be stronger for having escaped a punishing intra-party battle.

Mr. Rockefeller states that he will not dissociate himself from the campaign, but will make every effort to revitalize the Republican Party and set new goals for it. He is in a position to do this by virtue of a professional staff of a size and quality unique in American politics. It remains to be seen how truly far-sighted the goals they set will be. But at least Mr. Rockefeller, under his present plan, will not have to take hours negotiating with county chairmen for convention votes and can give more attention to clarifying the issues he has selected as paramount – "world policies, military defenses, economic growth, educational excellence, racial relations, social needs, public morals." If, in the process, he lifts the level of political debate, it will be to everyone's advantage. It may even generate some new ideas for the Democratic platform and help that party to avoid the temptation of spending all its energies in a negative attack on the Vice President.

Uppermost in the minds of professional Democrats is, of course, the question: Who is the man who can beat Nixon? It is an appropriate question for the party workers, but it is not the most important question. *That* question is: Who best understands what needs to be done if this nation is to grow in power and excellence, who best can interpret what he knows to the people, who best can rally the country and the Congress behind a legislative program that looks to the future? The temptation to blur this central question and focus instead on the Vice President's personality will be hard to resist. Nixon is vulnerable; he

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has said many wild and woolly things in his many campaigns. But if the Democrats are so foolish as to make him *the* issue, they run two grave dangers.

The first is that an unrestrained attack could boomerang to the advantage of the Vice President, for he surely can be counted on this time to keep to the high road, whatever the provocation. As the articles by William Costello have demonstrated, Mr. Nixon does not allow his emotions to rule him. Naturally, his conduct and character must be publicized. But if anything is certain about the forthcoming campaign, and not many things are, it is that this exposure will be made. How it is done may make the difference between turning independent voters away from Nixon because they do not trust him, or turning them to him as a victim of what is represented as unfair vilification.

But there is a more fundamental error in making Nixon *the* issue; and that is he is *not* the issue. The issue in this campaign is whether or not the voters will be given a chance to choose leaders who understand and dare to say what needs to be done if this country is not in the coming decades to become a second-rate power. Nothing could be more harmful for the future of both the Democratic Party and the country than now to assume that the election can and should be fought over personalities, that the "moderate," "me-tooism" of the Lyndon Johnson type is an adequate or even recognizable alternative to offer the voters; that, in brief, the campaign can and should be waged on the unambitious terms laid down by this Administration.

This is not 1924, whatever the superficial resemblances. Coolidge won't do. Platitudes about peace and prosperity won't do. Summitry as a substitute for strength and a long-term national commitment to world leadership won't do. The nation doesn't need a Democratic candidate who *looks* better than Nixon, but who *is* very much better. And who might that candidate be? To this question *The New Republic* will be returning in the coming weeks.

# Paris in the Spring

There have been few occasions when so many leading Western statesmen have met together for so long and to so little purpose as during the series of encounters in Paris just before Christmas. Indeed, if the heads of the major NATO governments could do so little to reconcile their own differences in December it is difficult to hope for anything from the Summit meeting in the spring when they will have to negotiate with Khrushchev.

This is probably the reason why the British Prime Minister seems to have won over his partners to the idea of a series of Summit conferences – for nothing can be expected from the first conference except to fix the date for the next one. The only issue on which a Summit conference ever seemed likely to reach a settlement was an interim agreement about Berlin. But the Western powers seem to have decided in Paris that when Mr. Khrushchev joins them they will have to start discussing Berlin all over again.

The Paris decisions, behind the appearance of a concession to Macmillan's demand for an early Summit, in fact postpone serious negotiation at the top until the US has a new President – with one proviso. For though early multilateral negotiations are ruled out, it would still be possible for Eisenhower to talk bilaterally with Khrushchev during his visit to the Soviet after the Summit. And if he reached agreement on any major issue, it would be difficult for any Presidential candidate to attack that agreement during the election campaign.

This, however, is a risk which Adenauer and de Gaulle had to be prepared to take. They no doubt feel safe enough. Apart from the assurances Eisenhower and Herter gave them in Paris, there is no sign that there is any realistic and concrete policy behind Eisenhower's goodwill. And there is equally no sign that Khrushchev would be prepared to meet Eisenhower half way on any specific issue. Thus the latest discussions on a nuclear test ban have broken down because the Soviet experts were ordered to reject the evidence offered on underground explosions by American experts without even offering reasons for their rejection. The Soviet Union too has its Trumans and Tellers who oppose a test ban in any case. Yet, this is an issue on which compromise is still possible; and Eisenhower would certainly have British support for any agreement on a nuclear test ban which he succeeded in making with Khrushchev during his visit to Russia. But it is an issue on which a Four Power Summit meeting could not usefully negotiate, since there is no present possibility of the French Government agreeing to a ban.

Meanwhile it must now be the main aim of those who want a wider settlement with Russia to promote the sort of unity inside the West on which such a settlement must rest. In this respect the meetings of the NATO Council were as disappointing as the meeting of the Western heads of government which followed them. The division between France and all the other members of the alliance on its organization and strategy remains as wide as ever. And though as usual the NATO Council has restated its military targets as first laid down many years ago, the member governments remain committed to defense programs which make these targets unattainable. NATO is left with forces which are inadequate for their stated aim, and irrelevant for any other.

The only important constructive decision reached in Paris was to try to mend the economic divisions in the Western world on an Atlantic basis, through an organization which would include the US and Canada as well as the Common Market countries, the Free Trade Association, and the remaining European outsiders.



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# Mission to South Asia

Shortly before adjournment the Senate, which had turned down one expensive aid-to-India proposal (long-term financing for the Development Loan Fund would have aided the Indian subcontinent more than any other single country), went along unanimously with Sen. John Kennedy's resolution calling on the Executive to

> "explore with other free and democratic nations and appropriate international organizations the advisability of establishing an international mission that would consult with governments in the area of South Asia on their needs . . . and . . . recommend methods by which the participating countries could jointly assist these South Asian governments in the fulfillment of their economic plans."

The idea had been cleared with the Administration in the person of Undersecretary of State C. Douglas Dillon, who had insisted only that the phraseology permit the inclusion of Pakistan and India's other immediate neighbors. What Mr. Dillon and Senator Kennedy (and co-sponsor John Sherman Cooper) had in mind was an autonomous commission of eminent men with standing in their countries who might, perhaps, avail themselves of World Bank technical advice but would not take the narrow bankers' approach in which the have-not countries – and their ambitions – are treated much the same as Wall Street treats Osage City. Some of the broad-gauged men who have been sounded out over the past year about service on such a mission were, from the outset, Jean Monnet, the first chairman of the European Coal and Steel Community, a prime mover in the effort within the Common Market for a Western European aid program; the brilliant Sir Oliver Franks, chairman of Lloyds Bank and former Ambassador to the United States, and Escott Reid of Canada, former Ambassador to New Delhi. Sir Oliver is a banker, and so is the Chase Bank's John McCloy, who was the American desired for the mission. Both are also men of sophistication in world affairs whose interest in such an assignment would presumably derive from a positive commitment to the general objectives of Western assistance for South Asian development.

As the result of Senator Kennedy's persistent pressure this fall, Undersecretary Dillon finally in late November took up the matter seriously with World Bank President Eugene Black. To avoid direct US sponsorship, Dillon proposed (and Kennedy agreed) that Black should in his individual capacity take the leadership in constituting the commission. They did not bargain, however, for Mr. Black's personal animosity toward Mr. Monnet and his disposition to play ball with Treasury Secretary Anderson at this moment of the Anderson ascendancy within the Administration. The mission which was finally constituted last week and is scheduled to spend February and March in South Asia consists of Sir Oliver, Chancellor Adenauer's banker friend Hermann Abs of the Deutschbank and, of all people, former Budget Director Joseph Dodge as the US member.

Mr. Black's veto of Jean Monnet and Secretary Anderson's pressure for Dodge (which was apparently governed, like the Diefenbaker Government's anxiety over the Reid appointment, by a desire to scale down the price tag on the mission's recommendations) have left Sir Oliver with two of the most conservative figures in the Western fiscal world as his collaborators. To be sure, the designation of a German as the Common Market's representative could conceivably have great value if Mr. Abs comes out for substantial government-to-government credits (as against the present German "aid" in the form of subsidies for private German business exports to the underdeveloped countries). And Joseph Dodge as a champion of large-scale aid to the South Asian governments might be influential with die-hard Congressional opponents of aid. This, at least, is the argument one hears in Mr. Black's defense, but it is difficult to swallow.

# "Yes, I Fear Washington"

Sen. Barry Goldwater, the "white hope" of America's thinning Neanderthal ranks, recently took part in a widely-publicized "debate" in his home state, Arizona, over the merits of accepting federal school aid. His opponent was Rep. Stewart L. Udall, Democrat, who was bold enough to suggest that Arizona should join her 49 fellow states in accepting federal funds available under the Defense Education Act of 1958.

Without a doubt, Goldwater is the most vocal and forthright Senator Arizona has ever sent to Washington. His colleague – veteran Sen. Carl Hayden, a Democrat – deserves his reputation for taciturnity, unsurpassed since Coolidge. With Rep. John Rhodes, a Republican from Goldwater's home county, as the remaining Arizonan in Congress, Udall alone has given voice to anything resembling dissent from Goldwater's position.

In the widely-broadcast (in Arizona) school-aid debate, Goldwater again demonstrated that he is the nearest thing America has to France's Poujade – a figure who cashes in on the popular aversion to bureaucracy and taxes. Supporting his Pulliam-sponsored compatriot – Gov. Paul Fannin, who first espoused Arizona rejection of US school aid – Goldwater contends acceptance would lead, inevitably, to federal control of education. Udall, on the other hand, believes Arizona should avail itself of the opportunity to beef up its schools, particularly in the areas of mathematics, sciences and foreign languages.

Udall contended Arizona's school districts must obtain outside help "because of the built-in limitations of



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the real property tax . . . [which is] outmoded, unrealistic and unfair. It places the heaviest burden on homeowners, who can least afford it." He described the various programs of federal aid to states as "the only real tax equalization we have . . . since federal taxation draws from the entire nation and redistributes the funds to the states according to need." He pointed out that the Arizona legislature – dominated by conservative interests – has continually balked at enacting any realistic tax reform. In one form or another, he said, the federal government has assisted states' educational programs for the past 98 years – and no federal controls have resulted. As one of the poorer states, Arizona has received some $148 in federal funds for each $100 it pays in federal taxes.

To all of which Goldwater replied: "I'm not out to rob New York for the benefit of Arizona."

"The big damage," he said, is that a child grows up thinking that the only source of freedom, or anything, is the federal government. . . . Yes, I fear Washington more than I do Moscow."

The Arizona press, dominated by Eugene Pulliam's reactionary twin Phoenix dailies, called the debate a "draw," but Senator Goldwater, helped by an extremely favorable press, has played a significant role in bending the major part of Arizona public opinion toward his personal point of view.

## Science Teachers

A few weeks ago, we referred to the small progress that has been made in stimulating interest in the teaching of science in high schools, and to the small amount that has been spent by the federal government on this "crash program" ($50-60 million). But there is more to be said about why so little progress is possible in the near future.

We assume that a high school physics teacher should be trained in physics and should know and care about what is going on in his field. But there are 9,000 high schools without a physics course, and of the 12,000 physics courses offered, probably half are not taught by physicists but by converted chemists, biologists or even English teachers put in to fill a hole. At least 15,000 trained teachers are needed, and since the turnover rate in high school faculties is about 10 percent (now higher in science due to competitive outside offers), we would need an additional 2,000 physics teachers a year. In other words, we would have to produce 35,000 physics teachers in the next decade.

But in 1956, the colleges graduated 2,300 physicists, which means that unless many more students are recruited to the trade, total production in the '60's will fall far below demand. To put it another way, seven out of eight physicists would have to go into high school teaching, and they won't. Instead, we will have the kind of science teachers who have never studied science or who have taken a couple of general science courses and are put in to fill an "emergency" and then retained because they have "experience."

## Limits to the Law

Charles P. Curtis, who died in Boston December 23, was that too rare figure, a lawyer not confined by the practice of law. He was a man of cultivation, eager for intellectual experiences outside the law. He taught government and sociology at Harvard. He was the co-author of books on hunting in Africa and Pareto, and of the delightful anthology *The Practical Cogitator*.

But he was, first, a lawyer who understood the public responsibilities of his profession. He drafted the Massachusetts Fair Employment Practices Act. For 11 years he was a member of the Harvard Corporation. He was active in the most eminent and useful of legal organizations, the American Law Institute. His 1955 book, *The Oppenheimer Case*, exposed in detail the unhappy proceedings in that tragic affair.

In three books he tried to explain law to the layman. The first and probably best of these, published in 1947, dealt with that eternal puzzle, the role of the Supreme Court in a democratic political system. The title, *Lions Under the Throne*, was taken from Francis Bacon's advice on judges: "Let them be lions, but yet lions under the throne." That was Charles Curtis' belief. His words are worth quoting as a sample of his crisp style and as a caution for those who look first to the Supreme Court to preserve our liberties:

> "That a statute is legal, that is to say, constitutional, is the least you can say for it, not the best. Much is allowable that is not admirable. . . . The Constitution gives us a standard, and that is good, but it is a low standard, and that is bad. Our most precious concerns are better than what can be secured to us by law. The law does what it can for us. We must do the rest ourselves."

## Suffer, Little Children

"Has the Commission no mind of its own?" Professor Charles Siepman of New York University asked rhetorically during the pre-Christmas FCC hearings on TV and radio programming. Mr. Siepman had answered his own question earlier: "The FCC stands guilty, as guardians of the public interest, of a quarter century of flagrant default." And there was little evidence in the hearings which have just been recessed that the Commission intends to do anything more than has been done to as-



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sure more variety, taste, intelligence or entertainment in broadcasting.

Indeed, from the questions asked by FCC Chairman Doerfer it is clear that he and his colleagues believe themselves to be responsible primarily to the industry, and not to the public whose interest, under the law, it is obliged to defend. Mr. Doerfer was far more interested in the mechanics of the FCC operation (*how much staff* would be needed to put on regional hearings, *how much money* would be needed to monitor programs) than he was in the principles underlying basic FCC responsibility. The Chairman took the lead in suggesting that what many witnesses proposed might constitute government censorship, indifferent apparently to the private censorship to which the public is subjected under the prevailing policy of letting the industry do just about what it wants. Mr. Doerfer threw up his hands when witnesses could not give him what one suspects he needs most – courage.

Meanwhile, how have the broadcasters been behaving? What are these uncensored program-makers doing with their freedom? Let us be precise. During the five days before Christmas, Sunday through Thursday, what shows did the network-affiliated stations offer the large audience of fairytale-minded children? We select the hours between four in the afternoon and 7:30 in the evening as the hours most appropriate for child listening. Programs vary of course from city to city, but let us take Washington, D. C., as a sample.

Not one single, special Christmas program suitable for younger children was available. The only two imaginative and worthwhile Christmas programs were both shown after 7:30 – after the bedtime hour of a great many youngsters under 7. And both of these programs – Disney's *Alice in Wonderland* and NBC's *Amahl and the Night Visitors* were taped repeats from former years.

However, between four and 7:30 p.m. from Sunday up to Christmas Eve, the wide-eyed kids could have seen, parents permitting, the following programs on the CBS affiliate station in the nation's capital: a Garbo film, John Payne in *Tear Gas Squad*, Gary Cooper in *Good Sam, San Francisco Beat, Cannonball, Ammonia Trap* and *Dial 999*. On the NBC affiliate station in Washington, D. C., there was *Death Valley Days*, Jackie Gleason, *The Gray Ghost, US Marshal*, Burns and Allen, *Saber of London* (investigating a fire at a warehouse) and *Guns for Empire*.

Oh yes, there was one exception. Two stations gave about 10 minutes to the Christmas tree lighting ceremony at the White House.

## UNEASINESS IN WEST GERMANY

# The Spirit of Camp David

*Bonn*

It may seem incredible, but is nevertheless true, that plenty of West Germans are beginning to think of the United States as the politically "uncertain" partner in the multiple-legged Western Alliance. A few months ago such an idea would have been unthinkable. Then, Adenauer was battling with his suspicions of Harold Macmillan because he favored the creation of a militarily thinned-out zone in Central Europe, of General de Gaulle because he was ready to recognize the Oder-Neisse line and was beginning his backstairs blackmail of NATO. Then, Adenauer regarded John Foster Dulles and General Norstad as the two surest props of his own policy – often reconsidered but never revised – of dealing with the Soviet Union "from a position of strength." Today, Adenauer's paladins of the Christian Democratic press have turned their attention to the potential uncertainties of American diplomacy. Why?

Some of Mr. Herter's diplomatic definitions have been somewhat ambiguous, but they have been quickly clarified and have not left more than a shadow of doubt behind them. It is otherwise with the phrase – "the spirit of Camp David" – which has developed a sinister ring here. For to Germans the phrase suggests a growing American readiness to seek a worldwide armistice with the Communist bloc – an armistice which might be at the expense of the Federal Republic. How else should it be reached, when Soviet aims in Germany remain precisely the same as a year ago? And what should be more natural than the rebirth – out of the boredom which any insoluble problem must eventually produce – of the thought that Germany, after all, is the country which ought to pay for the peace? Hitler's sins may, after all, be visited on more than one generation.

The fears have been given a double underlining – by President Eisenhower's "world tour" and by Douglas Dillon's visit to Bonn two weeks ago. The President's "pilgrimage for peace" has worried Germans because it has indicated very clearly that American interest is shift-



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ing from the stratified political scene in Central Europe to parts of the world where political issues are more fluid and may eventually be at least as dangerous. This, as Christian Democratic papers have been pointing out, does not necessarily mean a change of American policy in Central Europe. But it can very well mean a shift of American interest toward the underdeveloped countries of the world. For these will become key areas in an East-West struggle which – because Khrushchev wants it, and because this seems less immediately dangerous to the Western powers – will be fought out in the next decade primarily in the economic field. Such a shift of interest would inevitably mean greater Western readiness for an "accommodation" over the German problem.

Mr. Dillon's Bonn visit indicated a different kind of danger to the disciples of the "firm" policy of "treating with the Soviet Union from a position of strength." This was the real danger of diminished American financial backing for NATO. The thought that the Federal Republic could very well contribute more – and take a little of the load off the shoulders of the United States – would not have sounded untimely a few months ago. But, as it happened, Mr. Dillon's arrival in Bonn coincided with the presentation to the Bundestag of next year's West German budget. It is a convention for Ministers of Finance to wear long faces (save at election time); but Finance Minister Franz Etzel did offer good reasons for his gloom. His budget will be a record one, of 42.3 billion marks. He must turn to large-scale, long-term borrowing for the first time since the Federal Republic came into being 10 years ago. He was worried by rising food prices; and he knew that more than 10 million German wage-earners intend asking for higher wages next year, and will thus produce a fresh inflationary pressure on the economy.

In the circumstances it is perhaps not so surprising to find a government-steered monthly (*Die Politische Meinung*) writing that Adenauer has had to turn to Macmillan and de Gaulle at this juncture, in order to obtain their solid support and so induce President Eisenhower to descend from his own political ether to hard, firm ground. A few months ago such a demand would have been unthinkable – coming from an organ which propagates Dr. Adenauer's policies with flair and persistence. Nor has the Western Summit in Paris done more than bring a temporary upsurge of confidence in Bonn government circles. It is significant that, only three days after the Western Summit meeting ended, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* was writing that there was still disunity in the Western camp. In the paper's view the United States – and to a lesser extent Britain, too – was thinking in terms of an interim-solution of the German and Berlin problems "which would only whet the Russian appetite."

Concern over "the spirit of Camp David" has given rise to another nagging fear. Will the tendency of the Western powers be to stress the need for the Germans themselves to work out plans for their country's salvation? This, after all, is the view widely held among left-wing intellectuals in both Britain and France, and by the powerful Beaverbrook Press in Britain. "Leave the Germans to stew in their own juice" has become the watchword of the *London Daily Express*. Responsible Western statesmen do not go as far as this, but some of them – as the independent *Frankfurter Allgemeine* has pointed out – encourage what the paper calls an "initiative neurosis." The sense of this neurosis is that the Germans must take some part in helping to "break the ice of the Cold War" (that masterly phrase which Khrushchev has hammered into Western heads). Germans, so the argument runs, can best do so by developing new ideas for a solution of the German problem.

But this, Adenauer and his advisers believe, is just what they should not do. It would arouse alarm among Germany's many enemies within the Western camp, on the grounds that the Germans were trying to thrust themselves into the forefront, or capture the diplomatic leadership in Western Europe, or weaken NATO, or look for an "arrangement" with the Soviet Union at the expense of their partners. More important, in Adenauer's mind, is the thought that the Western powers must never be absolved from their alleged responsibility to reunify Germany.

Under the circumstances, the Chancellor can scarcely be blamed for retreating to his newly imposed diplomatic silence and back to his Maginot Line diplomatic positions – no change in the status of Berlin, no military weakening of the Western Alliance, no concessions to the Soviet "Two State Plan" for Germany, no progress toward general, controlled disarmament without some parallel progress in the political field. Hedged about with these embattled negatives, Adenauer is prepared to do no more than defend the status quo in Central Europe.

Never before has Germany been in greater need of some super-Stresemann, with subtle and powerfully-expressed ideas, in place of the publicly unobtrusive and privately unconvincing von Brentano. Never before has there been more need for a united, all-party foreign policy, in place of the gaping chasm which separates the main government and main opposition parties. Never before has there been more need for a lively, intelligent interest in their country's problems on the part of the people. There are three obstacles to the development of such an interest. The average German still absolves himself of all political responsibility. He is utterly bound up with personal and material problems. And he sees no great sense in pursuing a German reunification which has begun to look like a will-o'-the-wisp.

Since German reunification is, indeed, highly improbable, it is sure that Germany will be subjected to unending strains and stresses in the years ahead.

Terence Prittie



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LOUIS H. BEAN ON 1960 ELECTION PROSPECTS – I

# The Factor of Prosperity

Immediately after the Democratic and Republican conventions announce their Presidential candidates, we will all start predicting the winner. To do so intelligently it will be necessary to make assumptions as to business conditions next fall, the trend of the political tide, the probable turnout, the farm vote, the labor vote, the Negro vote, the religious vote, the suburban vote, the Western vote, the issues, as well as prospects for the House and Senate, and of course, what the flood of polls portends. In this series of articles, I plan to deal with these topics as guides for predicting the winner.

Practically every President has been confronted by the vagaries of the business cycle, either as a factor in putting him into the White House or getting him out. During the past five decades we have had the following departures from prosperity and full employment with varying influences on Republican-Democratic fortunes:

Two Wilson depressions (1914-15, 1920-21)
Two Coolidge recessions (1924, 1927)
One Hoover depression (1929-40)
One Roosevelt recession-depression (1937-38) within the Hoover depression
One Truman recession (1948-49)
Two Eisenhower recessions (1953-54, 1957-58).

The first Wilson depression, that of 1914, at the time of the outbreak of World War I, cut down his wide margin in Congress. The second one in 1920, which terminated the postwar inflation, brought the Republicans to power. The two recessions of 1924 and 1927 were of minor political consequence, but the Hoover depression of 1929-32 put Democrats in control all over the land and produced the New Deal and Fair Deal era. Its depth measured in terms of production, jobs and income was so great and so prolonged that within its span (1929-40) there is contained the severe Roosevelt recession-depression of 1937-38. I give it the double name because to loyal Democrats that New Deal business setback and increase in unemployment was only a recession. But to any good figure-minded Republican, the 1937-38 decline was as great in depth and duration as was the post World War I depression of 1920-21. It produced the first lowering of the New Deal tide.

The Truman recession of 1948-49 came a few months too late (from the Republican standpoint). Had it developed during the summer of 1948 instead of the winter of 1948-49 it probably would have cut down his dramatic victory in the face of the Progressive Party, the Dixiecrats and other hurdles, and might have denied him his own full term in the White House. The first Eisenhower recession in 1953-54 lingered on into the 1954 campaign period, but the Republicans lost fewer seats that year than was expected on the basis of past experience.

The second Eisenhower recession occurred in 1957-58. This time the political effect on a mid-term election was noticeable. The official view held in 1956-57 was that government, business and consumers were spending the economy into inflation. To check government spending it was, of course, necessary to insure that the national debt not be raised and the budget kept in balance. To guard trebly against feared possible inflation and subsequent deflation, steps were taken not only to cut federal expenditures, but also to reduce business and consumer expenditures. Tight business and consumer credit was allowed to become tighter, even though it was obvious that the immediate effect would be a decline in employment and a rise in unemployment.

Whether there will be a third Eisenhower recession in 1960 or whether the next surge in unemployment will come later are risky questions to answer. To unscramble the effect of unemployment from the influence of all other factors on the 1960 elections is also no easy task. But you must try to answer both questions if you start many months in advance to appraise the chances of the two parties in 1960.

Prosperity alone does not guarantee that the party in power can win. This is one of the lessons of the last three Presidential elections. The 1948 election of Truman may be considered as a typical case where the party in power retains control under generally prosperous conditions. It is true that the Progressive Party and the Dixiecrats deprived Truman of a substantial number of electoral votes, but this was more than made up by agricultural prosperity which farmers felt they would lose if the Republican candidate, Dewey, became President and proceeded to let their prices drop to 60 percent of parity. But prosperity in 1952 did not count much for the Democrats. A new factor dominated the 1952 election, the emergence into politics of a popular wartime hero, that permitted the Republicans to campaign effectively on the slogan that we needed a change. As far as unemployment was concerned there was actually rel-



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atively less of it in 1952 than in 1948, yet the Democrats lost control.

| Year | Unemployment Percent of Labor Force | Democratic Percent of Popular Vote |
|---|---|---|
| 1948 | 3.8 | 54 |
| 1952 | 3.1 | 45 |
| 1956 | 4.2 | 43 |

Do we conclude from this that business conditions will be a minor factor in the 1960 election? Before jumping to conclusions let us look at the recent 1958 mid-term elections as well as the 1956 vote, and at the most probable course of business and employment during the months before November, 1960.

For the last two decades we have witnessed an interesting employment pattern that may be suggestive of the unemployment rate in 1960. There has been greater employment, or less unemployment, in Presidential election years than in the mid-term Congressional election years, a sequence that tempts one to assume that there will be less unemployment in 1960 than in 1958. Here is the record:

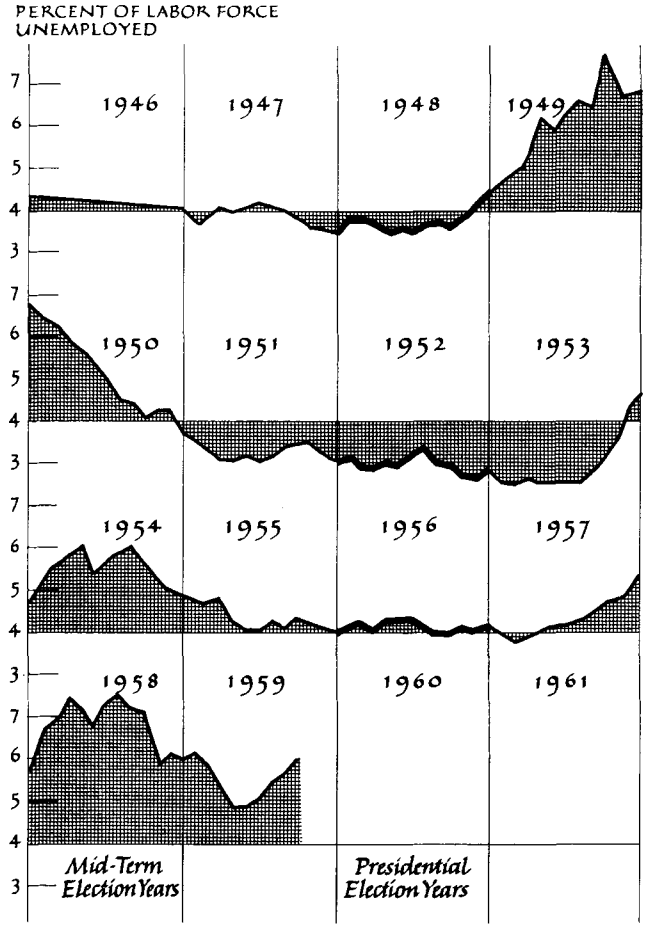
| Percent of Labor Force Unemployed | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Mid-term Years | | Presidential Election Years | | Difference |
| 1942 | 5.1 | 1944 | 1.6 | −3.5 |
| 1946 | 4.3 | 1948 | 3.8 | − .5 |
| 1950 | 5.3 | 1952 | 3.1 | −2.3 |
| 1954 | 5.6 | 1956 | 4.2 | −1.4 |
| 1958 | 6.8 | 1960 | ? | ? |

Note that in the mid-term election years unemployment has been greater than in the subsequent Presidential election years by 0.5 to 2.3 percentage points (leaving out the war year, 1944). For unemployment to be no greater than in 1956 a decline from the 1958 figure of 2.6 points is called for. The chances are reasonably good that the unemployment rate during 1960 will average about 2.5 percent below 1958. Before the steel strike that began in July, 1959, the unemployment rate had already declined to 4.9 percent. Unemployment would have continued its normal downward course until the end of the rising phase of the business recovery that set in during 1958. Assuming that the strike is settled soon and no other major strikes develop before the election, the resumption of the business recovery can be confidently expected. It will be based on the strike-deferred demands for automobiles and other hard and soft consumer goods, and for replenishing business inventories and on continued expansion of business expenditures for plant and equipment. These developments should lower the current unemployment rate (6 percent in November, 1959) to below 5 percent.

The above yearly record of unemployment for the four periods, 1946-49, 1950-53, 1954-57 and 1958 to date, shows us why the Presidential year 1960, if it follows the postwar pattern, may be expected to be a year of unemployment only somewhat above that of 1956. Scanning this record in the table and chart, one can see some evidence of a rising rate of unemployment under prosperity conditions since World War II. It was, for example, 3.8 percent in 1948 and 4.2 in 1956. While this is not a marked trend, it is enough to suggest that in the prosperity year of the current business cycle (1960) the unemployment rate could average above 4.2 percent. This would be the equivalent of a total of three million workers, representing probably about six million voters.

These figures are not small, whether as human beings or voters, but in the light of recent election experience their net effect on Presidential elections has been small. They do not by themselves indicate which party will win the Presidential election. At most they point to the fact that business conditions will be more favorable to the Republicans in 1960 than they were in the recession-recovery year 1958 but no more favorable, and quite likely less favorable, than in 1956. This small difference will not prevent Republicans from claiming paternity for prosperity.

UNEMPLOYMENT IN MID-TERM AND PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION YEARS



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THE FACTS ABOUT NIXON – XIV

*The irony of Nixon's career is that he has made the least admirable impression when, in seeming most effective, he overreached himself; and conversely, he has been truest to his best self when he acted with the greatest restraint. He made history, when he did, not in the headlines for which he strove so hard, but by the application of a trained legal mind to problems that could be solved by careful adherence to facts. "Despite every effort at candor, the dark threat is always implicit."*

# Can We Trust Him?

*by William Costello*

The paradox of Nixon is that, while few politicians have expressed themselves more volubly on issues, the core of his beliefs escapes identification; and although he displays a shopkeeper's punctilio in matters of personal honesty, few men in public life have been more harshly challenged on the moral plane. "You can't just play 'safe'," he reflected on one occasion in the company of the tennis stars Alex Olmedo and Althea Gibson. "You've got to play to win. That's the world today."

The more elusive Nixon's beliefs, the greater the temptation to judge him superficially; his personality gets in the way of his philosophy. He becomes fair game for the epigrammatists.

"When his public and private personalities meet," said one, "they shake hands."

If he did wrestle with his conscience, said another, "the match was fixed."

"It is not paradoxical," said a third, "that Nixon who leads a blameless personal life, who does not smoke or play cards, drinks sparingly and is a family man, is known to his opponents in politics as 'Dirty Dick'."

In some minds what engenders doubt is that Nixon's relations with people tend to burn themselves out. He holds himself aloof. Of his reticence he says "it doesn't come natural for me to be a buddy-buddy boy," but others have charged more expansively that "nobody really gets through to him" because he "climbs on people and then discards them." He is indestructible in the sense of being proof against slights that would destroy a thin-skinned man. He is afraid to be challenged, is therefore afraid to have men around who would challenge him. He has no real sense of inner security, has not had since the secret fund incident which so shattered his surety that he has never since been able to take people at face value.

He himself takes a cynical view of political friendships. Writing for *Life* magazine June 8, 1959, in tribute to John Foster Dulles, he shrugged off Washington as "a city where a political leader learns that the number of his friends goes up and down with his standing in the public opinion polls. . . ."

What further frightens some politicians about the Nixon operational code is that he understands the use of power but not the unwritten restraints on its use. The essence of the Anglo-American system is that a majority is sometimes too intangible for counting, that the rights of a minority are irrevocable when they are profoundly felt. In this concept there is a time when might does not make right, when superior numbers find it imperative to exercise self-restraint and seek an accommodation that all can live with.

When he is for civil rights, he talks of gradualism, but there is a high coefficient of tension in the pace and temper of his gradualism. When he is against corruption, he is hard and inflexible, with few of the saving graces of tenderness, humor, generosity toward the fallen. Even when he is right, he sometimes gives himself an air of smugness and self-righteousness. When he condemned Boyle and Gabrielson, no one rose to challenge his indictment but no one cheered. It was the same for Harold E. Talbott, whose careless relationships between his business enterprises and his position as Secretary of the Air Force made him, in Nixon's view, expendable. Similarly in the case of Murray Chotiner, questionable though his dealings might have been, there were some who shook their heads doubtfully at the haste with which Nixon dropped an old and trusted associate. Politicians find it unpleasant and sometimes costly to defend old friends who have strayed from the path of rectitude, but some feel there is no option if one is to live with his conscience.

Not infrequently, attempts to analyze Nixon's moral values end with an excursion into his methods. It has been said his platform appearances are "more central to his public personality than any clear political commitment." His skill relies less on the power of persuasion than on the power of suggestion. His method in campaigns is to skim the surface of a dozen subjects,



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ticking off an epithet here, an epigram there, skillfully blending warnings, assurances, invocations and defiance. His voice trembles with indignation, purrs with sincerity or throbs with hope. He carries audiences swiftly from thesis to thesis: national survival is worth whatever it costs – "the mushroom cloud that hangs over our heads spells a solemn warning" – "inflation must be dealt with" – "the remedy . . . is self-discipline at the bargaining table" – "mountainous farm surpluses lead to molehill prices" – "there is no room for complacency."

### *"Headlines Rather Than History"*

With a dash of the obvious, a tincture of faith, an infusion of canting solemnity, he lets it be assumed that his reasons are self-evident; his very didacticism is reassuring. His talent is in the use of language to arouse inferences going beyond anything he has actually said. He plants ideas by a calculated process of association. In two campaigns, Adlai Stevenson got the full treatment.

"Who is Mr. Stevenson," Nixon asked in 1956, "to be talking about the low road when he is the man who puts his arm around Harry Truman?"

In this he did not say Harry Truman was on the low road, but what other inference was possible? On another occasion Nixon linked the Democratic candidate with the worst elements in labor by the same sort of meretricious juxtaposition: "Stevenson's is a slave-labor program hammered together by a union clique that wants to continue holding workingmen captive to their selfish whim."

In one short sentence, by suggesting evil connotations, Nixon planted a series of invidious ideas on Stevenson – that he was associated with "slave labor," with a "clique," with "captives," and not just ordinary whims but "selfish" whims. In another passage which has become a classic in the use of innuendo, Nixon managed to indict Stevenson, not just for what he had said or done, but for what he might have done!

"I have just been thinking what would have happened if Mr. Stevenson had been President for the last three years," he said. "We, of course, do not know the answer to that question, but of these principles I am sure: Indecision, weakness, retreat, and surrender do not bring peace in dealing with dictatorial, aggressive Communism."

In so saying, Nixon did not charge Stevenson had been in a position to make mistakes in the handling of foreign policy; he did not say Stevenson had shown the weaknesses of character he enumerated. He did not even say peace had been achieved. What he did by an odious association of ideas was to invite his audience to assume that Stevenson's unfitness had been demonstrated.

For want of a philosophy in the broad sense, Nixon has shown an affinity for geopolitical thinking. Yet even this interest in the socio-economic as it relates to the process of political manipulation provides an uncertain ground for judgments. In the Korean War he misjudged MacArthur's strategic concept and failed to see the struggle in the true global perspective. In 1951, he was so obsessed with the doctrine of federal intrusion in economic affairs that he could not foresee the rising costs of government which were implicit in an inflationary world economy. In 1953, he failed to see the essential immorality of McCarthyism and its possible threat to the two-party system. In 1956, he failed again to grasp the scientific implications of nuclear testing and the inevitability of test suspension.

In deducing general principles from the events of the day, Nixon has a tendency to make headlines rather than history. Consider the pat formula he laid down in the summer of 1957 before the Young Republican Federation. "There are only three sure-fire issues against an administration in power," he pontificated. "Failure in foreign policy leading to war; failures in domestic policy leading to depression; failure in administration resulting in corruption."

The Eisenhower Administration was proof against all such adversity – of that he was confident. Yet 12 months later all these issues were on the front pages – recession, the Adams-Goldfine scandals, the landing of American troops in the Middle East – and the GOP went down to its worst defeat in 22 years.

After the outbreak of the Korean War in June, 1950, Nixon took a tortuous path in his treatment of war as a partisan issue. He began in his Senate campaign by advocating all-out support of the national effort in Korea, but from time to time he took an ambivalent line in assessing responsibility for the conflict.

In the Senate August 24, 1951 – in one of several similar comments on the subject – he attributed the success of the Communist revolution, in China as elsewhere, to "native Communist groups" who were "won to the cause" of Communism by effective propaganda. His analysis of the problem was by no means profound, but his acknowledgment clearly was that Communism is a self-starting, inner-directed movement.

The 1952 campaign found him on both sides of the issue. At the outset, in the August 29 issue of *US News and World Report*, he refused to subscribe to the views of "my good friends on the Republican side who refer to the Korean War as Truman's war in the sense that we should not have gone into Korea." Having thus established himself as a fair-minded patriot, he added this caveat: "By the same token, I believe that the Administration must assume the responsibility for the course of events which made it necessary to go into Korea." This after having said "native groups" were the motive power in Communist successes. On the stump he did not hesitate to go further, calling the Korean War "fruit-



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less and unnecessary" and a result of the "Truman-Acheson stumblebum program."

A year later, before the American Legion convention in St. Louis, he was again saying, "Let's recognize right now that the decision to go into Korea was right. . . ." And in his 1956 tenth anniversary speech in Manila he boasted, "What would have happened if the free nations had not joined in defending Korea?" Meanwhile, in January, 1951, he had uttered the threat to pull American forces out of Korea unless other United Nations members matched our manpower commitment.

*Having His Cake and Eating It Too*

In all this he contrived to have it both ways without seeming aware of any contradiction. At the supra-partisan level, he recognized the power and cunning of the Communist conspiracy, but at the partisan level he chose to put full blame for the East-West conflict on his political opponents. By 1955 he was ready to say "there is no war party," but on October 24, 1952, and countless times thereafter, he declared Truman's Administration "cannot be trusted to get us out of war in Korea or keep us out of future wars." He was at various times for containing Communism or for pushing it back behind the Russian frontiers. His values tend to veer with the headlines. His record on the Yalta Pact can be taken as a fair sample because it is articulate and categorical.

One of the least savory postwar charges against the Democrats – a by-product of bitter GOP resentment toward Roosevelt – was the cry that "secret" agreements in 1945 at Yalta had constituted a sellout to Communism. In a roundtable discussion of American foreign policy with Senator Knowland, October 26, 1950, Nixon was quoted by the *Los Angeles Times* as saying: "It is my belief that before we can assume a position of moral leadership among the free nations of the world, we should denounce the Yalta Agreement and should make it clear that while Communism may have destroyed in Poland and in China human liberty with its freedoms of religion and the press, it will not be done with our blessing. On this question, I sharply differ with the views of Mrs. Douglas, who still endorses the Yalta Agreement."

Two years later, in his campaign for the Vice Presidency, Nixon was no better informed. He issued a statement (October 5, 1952) in connection with New York's Pulaski Day parade asserting that Poland was "shackled by its Communist masters" because of "the shameful Yalta Agreement." The only hope for Poland was "our repudiation of Yalta commitments that abet Communist slavery of free nations and by working unremittingly, in peaceful fashion, for Poland's liberation."

The Eisenhower Administration had hardly taken office, however, when it became apparent there were no "secret" agreements. The President had promised Congress a resolution repudiating such agreements, but when none was found, the draft resolution he sent Congress February 20 proved vastly disappointing to the Republicans. When they protested, Dulles warned against any program of repudiation which might in turn give the Russians grounds for unilateral repudiation; and the President specifically warned at a news conference that the West could be put in a very awkward position in places like Berlin and Vienna if the United States undertook to renounce wartime agreements.

The legal value of the Yalta Agreement was in fact so warmly defended by the Administration that Taft and the GOP leadership simply dropped the proposed resolution as meaningless. Two years later, in a speech before the Executives Club in Chicago, Nixon still hesitated, however, to acknowledge his error. While conceding that Roosevelt at Yalta had not made "a deliberate attempt to sell out to the Communists," he insisted that it would take more months of study to enable him to comment intelligibly on the agreement.

History had the last word, however, during the winter of 1958-59 after Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev threatened unilateral abrogation of the Berlin occupation status. Dulles authorized a State Department white paper putting the Yalta Agreement and our Berlin rights in perspective. What it revealed was that, pursuant to agreement at the Moscow Conference of 1943, a three-power allied commission drafted plans in 1944 for the occupation of Germany and Berlin and as the final act

*Assets*



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of the 1945 Yalta meeting, the conferees said in a joint statement: "We have agreed on common policies and plans for enforcing the unconditional surrender terms which we shall impose together on Nazi Germany after German armed resistance has been finally crushed. . . . Under the agreed plan, the forces of the three powers will each occupy a separate zone of Germany. . . ."

This statement, with the accompanying protocols, had the effect of ratifying the Berlin occupation statute and became the legal means of saving two million West Berliners 14 years later. If Nixon had had his way, and if Yalta had been repudiated in a fit of partisan pique, only armed force could have saved the city. There is an unspoken hint now and then that Nixon should be forgiven the Yalta episode as one of the faults of youth and overeagerness. He may indeed regret it, but as a politician who puts a high premium on the myth of infallibility, he has never made that acknowledgment.

Over the years, painfully at times, Nixon learned the danger of impugning people's motives, but a minor incident in 1958 raised again the question whether his moral values had changed for the better or changed at all. During the Quemoy-Matsu crisis in September of that year, when the Administration had determined to resist Chinese Communist pressure for concessions, the *New York Times* reported one Saturday that the State Department had received 5,000 letters on the Formosan situation, 80 percent of them criticizing Administration policy. On more than one occasion, when the mail count was favorable, government agencies had not hesitated to embrace them as a public mandate, but Nixon was in no mood to tolerate an adverse proceeding. With an election looming, and with all the polls and issues running against him, he could not afford to shoulder another burden. Hence, after two hasty conferences with Undersecretary Herter, Nixon took it upon himself to issue a statement which not only challenged the significance of the mail count, but contained a brutal threat to State Department personnel.

"What concerns me primarily," he said, "is not the patent and deliberate effort of a State Department subordinate to undercut the Secretary of State and sabotage his policy. What is of far greater concern is the apparent assumption on the part of those who put out the story that the weight of the mail rather than the weight of the evidence should be the controlling factor in determining American foreign policy."

It was the charge of sabotage and the oblique imputation of disloyalty that caught the eye of observers who had been watching the image of the new, mature, high-level Nixon. The mail-count story had, in fact, been written casually on a dull Friday afternoon. The denial could have knocked it down merely by a matter-of-fact evaluation of the messages; another official probably would have taken this straightforward line, but Nixon gave it the stamp of his controversial personality.

Convinced there was a group in State trying to undercut Dulles' Far Eastern policies, and contending (despite evidence to the contrary) that the story had been "leaked" with sinister intent, the Vice President's reflex was instinctive. He struck back with a harsh *ad hominem*. It was a deliberate attempt to intimidate federal workers; he admitted as much by saying later that the warning implicit in his statement "had the effect I intended." By his veiled threat he exposed himself again to a charge of "fascist tendencies," for no one could escape the inference that, if it were his Administration, anyone running afoul of policy, even inadvertently, could expect only the most merciless reprisals.

The irony of Nixon's career is that he has made the least admirable impression when, in seeming most effective, he overreached himself; and conversely, he has been truest to his best self when he acted with the greatest restraint. He made history, when he did, not in the headlines for which he strove so hard, but by the application of a trained legal mind to problems that could be solved by careful adherence to facts.

The tragedy of Nixon is that he placed in jeopardy his reputation as a moral man, not in the sense of cheating at cards but in the school of oneupmanship, of how to win without actually cheating.

In his lexicon, despite every effort at candor, the dark threat is always implicit. The unspoken warning lingers, a shadowy source of anxiety and fear. The hint of omnipotence carries with it an insinuation that Big Brother is watching.

Is there any real warrant for such inferences, such apprehensions? Nixon's admirers would say the question is disingenuous. His critics have no ready answer. Their portrait of him is diffuse, negative, lacking in warmth. Their favorite refuge, for want of a final characterization, is an old English rhyme: I do not love thee, Dr. Fell:/The reason why I cannot tell;/ But this I know, and know full well:/I do not love thee, Dr. Fell.

WITH THIS ARTICLE, *Mr. Costello concludes his "unauthorized biography" of the Vice President.* The Facts About Nixon *will be published in book form by Viking Press this month and be sold in bookstores for $3.95.*

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# *Decency Is Not Enough*

*by Leslie A. Fiedler*

I have had a difficult time trying to find exactly what it is that I am moved to say of Lillian Smith's no-longer-very-new novel, yet I have never for a moment been tempted to slip it into place on my bookshelf and forget it. Apparently few readers have been much impressed by Miss Smith's attempt to repeat the success of her best-selling protest novel

*One Hour*
by Lillian Smith
Harcourt, Brace; $5)

of 1944, *Strange Fruit;* and fewer readers, I am sure, still remember the details of the plot of *One Hour,* which begins with the sixty minutes a little girl spends alone in an empty store where she is, perhaps, assaulted by an eminently respectable scientist – and which ends with the breakup of a family and a riot in which a whole community publicly exposes its fears, guilts and irremediable shame. Yet this book seems to me to be an exemplary one, the embodiment of all that is socially, even ethically admirable in latter-day liberal humanism – and of all in that movement which is, from the point of view of art, inert, smug, false and hopelessly dull. I do not really mind seeming offensive when the occasion demands it; yet I hesitate to commit the final offense of appearing to judge decency in the name of aesthetics and to find it wanting. The real point is that art has become in our time the arbiter of politics and morality, even though the official guardians of the state continue to act as if the opposite were true.

Ezra Pound is not the judge but the prisoner before the bar; but when we admit that he is a greater artist than, say, Arthur Miller or John Hersey or the editorial writers for *Life* or *The New Republic* (by one or another of whom his actual judges may well have been instructed), we must surely mean that he possesses and transmits more subtly and richly than they a greater share of the truth about our lot. Not many of us would choose to live in a world controlled by Pound's paranoiac politics, but no one of us can afford to forget the disturbing fact of which he reminds us: that liberal humanism is a beautiful lie based on other even more beautiful and hoary lies; that our lives are more absurd, more disorderly, more terrible than we can – for the sake of enlightened political action – ever permit ourselves to grant. As a matter of fact, the greatest art of the last several decades has been dedicated precisely to reminding us that the second-rate lay religion by which the majority of Americans – from Eisenhower Republicans to New-Deal-nostalgic Democrats – live, is just another Opiate of the People. Of this, Lillian Smith does *not* remind us.

I do not mean that she is unaware of the tradition of anti-liberal, anguished, problematical art from the time of Dostoevsky to the very edge of our own. She recites the litany of distinguished names from Kafka to Faulkner, adds to them those of the more agonized theologians from Kierkegaard to Niebuhr; but their books remain merely books on shelves in her pages, standard equipment recommended by the interior decorator, like the record-stack beside the Hi-Fi or the up-to-date canvases on the walls of the apartments in which her chic protagonists face up to the standard problems of our era. In the midst of talk about the role of science, the place of the Negro, the threat of anonymity, the function of love – we pan in on a painting by John Marin, fade out on one by Jackson Pollock (bought, Miss Smith, hastens to assure her reader, even before he became wildly fashionable!), listening all the while to Dinu Lipatti playing Chopin.

She is, she will obviously have us know, no Harriet Beecher Stowe writing a pious and philistine tract; she is no longer even the relatively naïve self who produced the best-selling *Strange Fruit* when "liberalism" was an unqualified honorific, and "neo-orthodoxy," like "neo-conservative," was an unfamiliar, dirty word. Miss Smith has been educated since, re-oriented, perhaps even psychoanalyzed; and the theories of Freud have modified and complicated her social views as deeply as has the New Literature or the confessions of disillusioned fellow-travellers. Yet her involvements with modern art, modern disenchantment and modern psychology seem not so much radical engagements as additional pieties directed toward what the truly enlightened have at the end of the 'fifties declared Worthy of Admiration. The range of genteel, liberal tolerance has been extended – not only to sex and political self-criticism but also to yesterday's *avant-garde* art; and *One Hour* is as sure a sign that Modernism is dead, as the vogue of Erich Fromm that the Sexual Revolution has become another patriotism, or the performance of Khrushchev in Hollywood that the Left lives on only in philistine cant. While we slept, T. S. Eliot has become scarcely distinguishable from Browning, the paintings in the Museum of Modern Art as invisible as Whistler's mother.

In the code of genteel sentimentality, there are a new virtue and a new vice; the righteous are reborn knowing that it is bad to despise the Modern, good to buy it. But there have been other additions to the Higher Code of Decency, too; and Miss Smith's plot has been manipulated to accommodate them all, not only such traditional articles of faith

*In the current issue,* ROBERT LEWIS TAYLOR *talks about the recent cranberry crisis, and makes some very sour projections.* GERHART NIEMEYER *has a look at the Impending Thaw. And Professor* WILLIAM PETERSON *announces a new Law, named after himself.*

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as anti-anti-Semitism, anti-anti-integrationism, anti-anti-intellectualism, anti-anti-scientism – but also anti-anti-paraplegicism (Miss Smith's hero is a one-legged Episcopalian minister, her heroine an enlightened woman who can gaze on his stump unmoved) and anti-anti-sexuality (the paraplegic and his unmoved beholder end up in bed together, though she is the wife of his closest friend; and in her arms he attains his greatest vision of truth, is saved).

The moral ambiguity which our age has learned to find everywhere, not only in the work of its contemporaries, but backward in Melville and Hawthorne, in Twain and Charles Dickens, now becomes incumbent on the morally earnest. And "moral ambiguity" we get, administered with the same heavy hand, the same unctuous air as presided over the ladling out of moral certainty when that was thought good for what ailed us. Not only in Miss Smith, but everywhere throughout the liberal community, there is a sense of the same puritanical disavowal of puritanism which has remade the American family as the discoveries of Gesell and his associates became the prescriptions of Dr. Spock. In the name of ambiguity and *angst*, we are now asked – with the proper quantum of anguish – not only to approve of a minister in his moment of what used to be called sin (it is as if Hester Prynne, reborn, had been educated at Bennington and permitted to rewrite *The Scarlet Letter*); but we are further asked to entertain the possibility that a good man (the third leg of Miss Smith's triangle), a persecuted and able scientist, may really have tried to rape an eight-year old girl – a hysterical child who prefers charges against him.

The image of rape so long the key image of terror for the Southern imagination still persists in Miss Smith's neo-Southern tale; but the struggle of Black and White, which is its traditional setting, has been moved to the periphery of the action, to a world of fantasy and fear by which the charges are only indirectly influenced. This time around we have no scared mulatto girl (as in the protest novel of a hundred years ago) pursued by the slavering slavemaster, no neurotic white woman (as in the protest novel of yesterday) screaming "rape" to cue the destruction of a Negro; only a grown man and a little girl, both white, and engaged, without hope of understanding or resolution, in the one class-struggle our classless, child-oriented culture finds real; the combat of the scruple-ridden adult and the amoral, half-emancipated kid. That the ultimate villain of Miss Smith's novel be not the mindless segregationist, the thug lusting for violence, the corrupt banker, but the Girl-Child as Bitch merely proves her a member of a modern company which includes Richard Hughes, Vladimir Nabokov, William March, Raymond Queneau (whose *Zazie dans le Metro* is the funniest of the recent travesties of children) – as hopelessly obsessed, for all her right-minded pretensions, by the fear of the Children's Revolt as any of her yahoo neighbors by the nightmare of the Black Insurrection. It is the one terror into which Miss Smith falls rather than leaps, and is responsible for the book's most convincing moments.

Terror in general dismays her no more than sex. Even the finally tragic – which is to say, bloody – climax she does not avoid, having perhaps read Lionel Trilling's assertion that the liberal mind has no affinity for tragedy and being determined to prove him wrong. Certainly she is prepared, in the interests of grimness, to kill off two innocents, one of them a talented artist, the other a young boy; to permit the destruction by spite and mob violence of a scientific project and a scientist's career; to show the corruption of a whole community. In return she asks only the price sentimentality demands of truth: the right to assert, at the last possible minute, what the jacket blurb calls "a passionate affirmation." In her conclusion, not only does the book's most cowardly protagonist improbably find his courage, but the book's conscience, the holy adulterer, earlier freed in bed from guilt and terror, finds the strength to pray that he may "look at the good that is so close to the evil, that we must see and acknowledge or perish."

Everything is there finally, everything but the ultimate truth and the ultimate courage, which have no need to assert courage as a fact or truth as a moral tag. The lessons of Freud and Kierkegaard and of the tortured makers of modern art, the ambiguities of the apostles of a terrible freedom and the uses of *angst*, all is reduced to the level of middlebrow piety, of the sophisticated philistinism just now replacing the older, more naïve model. And who could ask more than the warmth, the decency, the compassion, the love of justice, even the comfortable dullness which inform this book – except one who has known the outrage, the scandal, the offense of great art.

## *Contemplations of a Logician on a Snowman*

This snowman fell (like Satan) from the skies,
and those are coals that imitate his eyes.
His hands are broomsticks, halved for double wrong,
and in his heart where fire might belong
he keeps eternal company with cold.
He fears the sun. He never will grow old.

And yet the children made him: rolling joy
into a human ball to make a toy.
And passersby take time from passing time
to smile at native stature so sublime.
His hands drop off, his body melts apart –
we turn our eyes away and cross our heart.

The inference is plain. The angels fell,
and all we Adams followed them to Hell
and walk the furious streets intent on cold,
and fear the sun, his proud and envious gold,
because upon the naked lawns all see
the Heavens burn the world in effigy.

PAUL PETRIE



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# Sixty Years of Comics

*by Peter Salmon*

During a New York City newspaper strike in the 1930's, Mayor LaGuardia took to the air to read the funnies to the deprived citizenry. If there were a similar situation today – and a similarly imaginative mayor – it is unlikely that he would feel impelled to perform the same service. Not that there has been any diminution of interest in the funnies (*The Washington Post*, at a recent count, had 32 strips, in addition to panel cartoons), but rather that television offers, at least during the daytime hours, an almost unrelieved succession of animated cartoons, most of which unfortunately, present unalloyed violence and horror to a degree happily unknown among their more stationary newspaper brethren.

*Comic Art in America*
by Stephen Becker
(Simon & Schuster; $7.50)

The funnies, as Stephen Becker makes clear in his new book, *Comic Art in America*, are a comparatively recent art form. It was in 1907 that *Mutt and Jeff*, the first true comic strip to appear and endure, turned up in the sports pages of *The San Francisco Chronicle*. The way, of course, had been paved by Outcault's *Yellow Kid* (which gave "yellow journalism" its name), by *Buster Brown*, *Happy Hooligan* and *The Katzenjammer Kids*, but Bud Fisher's creation was the first strip to become a regular newspaper feature.

Becker's book is not concerned solely with the funnies. There is a chapter on animated cartoons from *Gertie the Dinosaur* of 1903 to *Tom Terrific* and Bert and Harry Piel. And there are sections dealing with magazine cartoonists, comic books, and sports cartoons, together with a chapter that describes in detail all of the Pulitzer Prize-winning editorial cartoons.

But his main interest is in the funnies, not so much in their social implications as in the cartoon industry as a business. The stories he tells of Joseph Patterson, perhaps the greatest of the cartoon editors, are particularly revealing. In his association with *The Chicago Tribune* and *The New York Daily News*, Patterson had a part in bringing to the American public some of the most popular of all funnies. He did more than select the strips; he worked closely with the cartoonists. For example, it was he who named *Dick Tracy*, specified that he be a bona fide policeman, christened Tracy's girl friend Tess Trueheart, and conferred monthly with Chester Gould on problems of continuity. Later he changed Milt Caniff's proposed *Tommy Tucker* to *Terry*, to which Caniff added *and the Pirates*, and insisted that there be comic relief in this adventure strip.

Editors interested in building circulation might pay attention to Patterson's concern with his comics. Becker does not make the point, but it is true that some papers have the magic touch when it comes to the funnies and others lack it. *The Daily News* has always had it; so has *The New York Post* (with *Pogo*, *Dennis the Menace*, *Mary Worth*, *Abbie 'n' Slats* and *Nancy*). The Scripps-Howard papers have usually missed, turning up all over the country with nondescript pages, leavened only by *Peanuts* and *Out Our Way*, the latter of which comes as close to immortality as any daily comic work may aspire.

*The New York Herald Tribune*, the vicissitudes of which are of concern to all interested in good contemporary journalism, has a history of fumbled opportunity in the field of the funnies. *Ferd'nand*, *Penny* and *The Saint* are run-of-the-mill, one cut above the Scripps stable; *Miss Peach* is one of the better new strips and has a loyal following; but the latest addition to the *Tribune* page is a thing called *B.C.*, which is inconsistent, anachronistic and sadistic, and a daily affront to the intelligence of anyone smart enough to read the comic pages. Mr. Whitney's editors, it is clear from *Comic Art in America*, would be well advised, in the interest of increasing readership, to look more closely at this portion of their paper. And if they would like two good daily strips, they could do worse than turn to the West Coast, which, as Becker points out, has been the birthplace of so many of the best funnies. There they will find


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Gus Arriola's *Gordo* and Jack Kent's *King Aroo*, two fine strips, both of which are unaccountably missing from Becker's Pantheon, possibly because neither has yet made the daily pages of the New York papers, although *Gordo* may be seen in a blaze of color in the Sunday *Tribune* itself.

*Comic Art in America* has its flaws. Becker's viewpoint is completely uncritical. Nothing is included that is not approved; nothing is approved that is not lauded; and virtually nothing is omitted. There is very little by way of illustration of early comic art in any of the fields he touches, and some of what there is is so badly reproduced as to be completely unreadable. But the book does take the reader of any age back to his youth and give him the chance to re-acquaint himself with such favorites as *Krazy Kat, Gasoline Alley, Brother Juniper, Skippy, Beetle Bailey,* Jimmy Hatlo's *They'll Do It Every Time* (second only to *Blondie* in current readership), *Reg'lar Fellows, Hairbreadth Harry, Hiawatta, Metropolitan Movies, Toonerville Trolley* and *Smitty,* to pick only a few personal favorites from a long, long list.

Being funny, one gathers from Becker's book, is a serious business. Highbrows, sneaking surreptitious looks at *Pogo,* while keeping their eyes carefully averted from the rest of the page, are ill-advised to sneer. The contemporay comic strip, with its vast readership, its contributions to the language, its services to good causes, is not something to be laughed at. Not, with a few exceptions, to be laughed at at all.

# A Tolstoy of Our Time

*by Frank J. Warnke*

Although Maxim Gorki has called it "the first Soviet historical novel," Alexey Tolstoy's *Peter the First,* now available in English translation, is conspicuously more traditional than revolutionary. In technique it is a very old-fashioned novel, cast in a mold which suggests *Quentin Durward* more than it does *War and Peace.* In its interminable cast of characters, its aimlessly shifting focus, its combination of meticulous detail and epic scope, it would place severe demands on even the hardiest 19th-Century reader. If the book offers nothing new, nothing even contemporary, in technique, it offers no more originality in the themes which underlie that technique itself.

*Peter the First*
by Alexey Tolstoy
translated by Tatiana Shebunina
(Macmillan; $5)

Perhaps Gorki found a Soviet quality in the novel's very vastness, or in the fact that all its characters, including in a way even Tsar Peter, are ultimately swallowed up in the author's sense of the Russian masses, whose sufferings and destiny make up the real texture of the book. But is this sort of thing a new departure in Russian writing? Awareness of the masses, together with an implicit belief in their sanctity, is a dominant theme of the great Tolstoy (who is not related to the author of *Peter the First*), and the sense of a specifically Russian destiny related to the masses emerges with immeasurably greater significance in the work of Dostoevsky. And the theme which, above all, gives *Peter the First* its tenuous unity – Russia's love-affair with the West, embodied in Peter's obsessive attempt to impose European customs and standards on his people – receives more profound and self-aware scrutiny in Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons.* Turgenev was capable of recognizing and analyzing the curious amalgam of love and hatred in the Russian attitude toward the West; Alexey Tolstoy is merely another manifestation of it.

The virtues of *Peter the First* – vigor, color, careful historical scholarship, cumulative force – have a similar relationship to tradition. At its best the novel achieves a version of that enormous vitality of surface which we associate with Russian fiction, and at these moments we are inclined to forgive its most obvious flaws – formlessness, and an inconsistency of focus which amounts almost to irresponsibility. Less easy to overlook is the doctrinaire naturalism which afflicts Alexey Tolstoy's work: if life is monotonous, a truthful novel must reflect this monotony; if life is repetitious, a truthful novel must repeat itself. Thus, since Russian life at the turn of the 17th and 18th Centuries was cruel and brutal, Tolstoy adorns every chapter with at least one beating or torture scene. But the novel's dreary pageant of battered buttocks finally inspires more boredom than horror; as always, the scrupulously literal imitation of reality ends by giving us no feeling of reality at all.

If his naturalism tends to deny him the indispensable techniques of selection and suggestion, it has equally destructive effects on his characterizations. Typically, a member of Tolstoy's enormous cast appears, gets himself described, undergoes some experiences (usually unpleasant), reappears, and finally disappears in the trackless verbal wastes, never to be heard from again. Some characters, of course, survive the 768 pages which Tolstoy completed before his death in 1946 – Peter himself, his favorite Menshikov, his mistress Anna, the peasant boy Alioshka Brovkin, who rises in station through serving the Tsar.

But Alioshka remains an unlikely stick throughout, and his sister Sanka, who changes from a barefoot peasant girl to the toast of several European courts, seems almost a refugee from a less respectable type of historical fiction than *Peter the First.* Anna, the German girl from Moscow's foreign quarter, who loves and then betrays Peter, is murky in her motivation, and Menshikov, in his mixture of intelligence and triviality, devotion and selfishness, remains as enigmatic in Tolstoy's fiction as he is in history. Even Peter is viewed exclusively from the outside: we know from history that he was a man of many contradictions – an oriental despot who loved the West, a bold military leader who was subject to fits of cowardice, a boisterous companion who had a streak of cruelty comparable to that of Ivan the Terrible. Tolstoy's novel does not clarify the picture through any achievement of imaginative understanding.

But imaginative understanding of a figure like Peter the Great assumes first



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of all the adoption of a point of view toward him, and a point of view is precisely what Tolstoy does not adopt. There is a savage undertone of triumph in his account of Peter's victories, a prophetic suggestion that Russia, finally rid of selfish nobles and superstitious priests, will one day defeat the West at its own game. But these are aspects of an attitude toward Peter as symbol, not toward Peter as character. They do not give definition to the hero's personality, any more than they give artistic form to the sprawling material of the novel. For what *Peter the First* finally lacks, and the lack is fatal, is a guiding idea capable of at once recognizing the reality of character and achieving a unity of theme and form. In the difficult genre of historical fiction, such a guiding idea really amounts to a philosophy of history, and in Alexey Tolstoy's imposing failure we look in vain for one, Marxist or otherwise. To work at the level of art, the historical novel must be a fusion of character, theme, and vision. And to find that we must return to the other Tolstoy.

# *The Art of Marianne Moore*

*by Delmore Schwartz*

Miss Moore's 15 new poems do not represent a further development of her poetic gifts; and indeed her new volume contains one bad poem on the Brooklyn Dodgers in which Miss Moore makes

*O To Be A Dragon*
by Marianne Moore
(Viking; $2.75)

the infamous but understandable suggestion that "Willie Mays should be a Dodger. He should – ." But the reader can disregard this poem, whether or not he is a baseball fan. The book as a whole is further evidence that Miss Moore is perhaps the most original poet alive.

It is interesting, up to a point, to try to figure out the way in which Miss Moore writes a poem; she was once a librarian and has the occupational tendency of everyone who is a professional reader and a metropolitan citizen to look at words and titles and newsprint, seeing the words without necessarily hearing them. As a result, the uninstructed or unsympathetic reader mistakes her poems for soundless prose constructions and dismisses Miss Moore as a self-indulgent egghead addicted to the writing of crossword puzzles which are palmed off on the vast reading public of poetry as genuine verse.

The absolute untruth of this impression can be self-demonstrated simply by reading Miss Moore's *O to Be a Dragon* aloud:

"If I, like Solomon, . . .
could have my wish –
my wish . . . O to be a dragon,
a symbol of the power of Heaven –
of silkworm-
size or immense; at times invisible.
Felicitous phenomenon!"

The felicitous precision of Miss Moore's use of English can be illustrated by quoting one of the unforgettable and delightful poems in her first book, *Observations:* Miss Moore in what must be a classic among schoolboy howlers wrote "Caesar crossed the Alps cum diligentia." The schoolboy had written "Caesar crossed the Alps with diligence." Miss Moore's precise and poetic comment shows that she is a mistress of charm and of the colloquial – "it is not that one is daft about the right meaning, but this familiarity with the wrong meanings puzzles one."

This instance should also suffice to explain and justify what T. E. Eliot said in his introduction to Miss Moore's *Selected Poems:* her poems "form part of the small body of durable poetry written in our time . . . in which an original sensibility and alert intelligence and deep feeling have been engaged in maintaining the life of the English language."

Miss Moore is not only defending the English language from the barbarians among us, she is doing a great deal more: using the enormous magnifying glass of her sensibility, she regards the animal kingdom, all the gardens of fauna and flora, including dragons with curiosity, wonder, and delight.

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## THEATER

# Please Pass the Plasma

I used to wonder, in more innocent days, just what in heaven prevented the audience at a really agonizing play from rising *en masse* before the work was over, marching ominously down the aisle, and letting fly at the stage with every object in sight, including hats, minks, pocketbooks, chesterfield coats, programs, and back copies of *Cue* magazine. After half-a-season of regular playgoing, I think I've found the answer: nobody has the strength. Current

*The Fighting Cock*
by Jean Anouilh
(ANTA Theater)

Broadway drama functions like a powerful infernal machine which cheerfully and systematically pumps the blood out of everyone's veins.

Consider my case. I am, I think, in perfect health. Yet over the past four months I have been growing steadily more enfeebled until now my thin and pallid fingers can hardly depress the keys of the typewriter. After Dore Schary's *The Highest Tree*, my heartbeat became weak and irregular; William Inge's last contribution drained all the blood from my head; and coming out of Robert Anderson's *Silent Night, Lonely Night* I found my toes had turned cold. It is not simply that these plays were not well written. My resistance to the virus of clumsy playwrighting has always been abnormally high, and, anyway, it was *Five Finger Exercise*, engineered with metronomic precision, that nearly did me in (the effect was sneaky – I had expected a drama about the English drawing room and was given instead a mechanical psychosexual play about slander, incest, adultery, and homosexuality in a family I could swear was from Long Island). The present unhappy condition of my nervous system is the result of something much more intangible – namely, that most recent plays have been so deficient in vital juices they have begun to dry up my own.

I would not even have the strength to tap this out had I not just received a half-pint of plasma from Jean Anouilh. *The Fighting Cock*, as his play is called here (the original title, *L'Hurluberlu*, means a reckless idiot), is full of flaws, and perhaps we'd better get to these immediately. Structurally, it's a mess. As a play, in fact, it has yet to be written. What emerges instead is a series of character sketches strung together with transitional dialogue. Certain scenes – like an ancient vaudeville wheeze about an ugly old maid who asserts, hopefully, that she has been compromised – seem to have wandered into the play by mistake; and whole speeches, characters, and theatrical devices have been lifted, without alteration or improvement, from the author's previous works. In *The Fighting Cock*, Anouilh lunges abortively like a fencer who can't make up his mind among a choice of opponents, and there is very little that is unified about the play other than a theme, a sentiment, and a mood. In our present state of artistic parch, however, I am almost willing to settle for these, especially when the theme is pertinent, the sentiment deeply felt, and the mood so bitter-sweet.

Recalling *Waltz of the Toreadors*, Anouilh's hero is once again an aging authoritarian in love with the past, defeated by the present, heroic and foolish in his refusal to accommodate to modern life. A great hero of a republic he despises, the General of *The Fighting Cock* has organized a futile, farcical movement designed to rid the world of maggots (the comfort-loving, mindless, greedy insects that populate modern society), and to restore to the country the virtues of "austerity, discipline, and hard work" – he cannot accept a France from which all the old absolutes have disappeared. Sometimes, the General merely functions to express Anouilh's own prejudices – we are treated to a violent attack on the techniques of Beckett, Adamov, and Ionesco through an "anti-drama" parody called *Bing-Bong*, consisting entirely of "an utter and engulfing silence"; more often, his discontent extends to wider aspects of democratic life – egalitarianism, progress, and (as represented by a coldblooded sophisticate named Tarquin Edward) the moral collapse of the young. But since change is inexorable, the General's movement flops weakly; his wife (telling him that "France and I continue to change") prepares to leave him; and he is left alone on stage, with his tiny son, to ruminate on the sadness and absurdity of life.

Clearly, there is not much substance here. But one must be grateful for a play animated by observation of life rather than by clinical theory, and for a playwright who is an artist rather than a psychological adjustment broker. *The Fighting Cock* is valid if only for the strength and vigor of its intelligent dissent, and, happily, some of this intelligence and vitality has been preserved in the production. Rolf Gerard's transparent, water-colorish settings are the work of an unusually bold yet delicate imagination, and Peter Brooks' direction, while somewhat precious (his besetting sin), is generally competent for the occasion. Natasha Parry is that rare thing, an ingenue not girlish but womanly, and she gives a soft, glowing performance as the General's wife, while Gerald Hiken contributes an extremely funny caricature as an idiotic but loyal petty bourgeois craftsman. Rex Harrison looks wonderfully like an Asiatic warlord, his eyes narrowed, his hair a close-cropped grey; and, aside from a maddening habit of not listening when others are speaking, he performs wonderfully too. But I think he is rather miscast. The General, because he knows next to nothing about modern life, is constantly being deflated and surprised; Harrison is an actor who looks as if he had nothing more to learn. He is hip, the General is square. Were he quite a bit younger, he might be properly cast as the knowing Tarquin Edward – a character who, in the hands of Roddy

### Notes on Contributors

Leslie A. Fiedler, *head of the English department at the University of Montana, is the author of* An End to Innocence *and other books of criticism.* Paul Petrie *teaches at Nebraska State Teachers College.* Peter Salmon *is an ex-clergyman.* Frank J. Warnke *is on the English faculty at Yale.*



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McDowell, now seems too brash and callow.

Anouilh first came to attention in America falsely labeled as a playwright of the French Resistance; he has lately become a playwright resisting modern France. Always disposed towards traditionalism in his forms and techniques, Anouilh is now trying to dramatize the anachronistic quality of his own position – based on the conflict between the past and the present, his recent plays are about the importance and futility of maintaining traditional values in a world which no longer cares. He is evolving like a stringent critic of contemporary life; yet he remains a popular Boulevard dramatist, proving that, in France at least, commercial drama does not have to scrape before the public's values any more than it has to express the public's failure of nerve. Thus, even when Anouilh's work is shoddy, his sap still flows free. ROBERT BRUSTEIN

## MOVIES

# *Black Orpheus, White Nimrod*

*Black Orpheus* (Lopert)
*Hound-Dog Man* (20th Century-Fox)

It is obvious – once you see it done – that dance is a felicitous method for film storytelling. A form which *is* motion belongs in motion pictures. This was clear to Marcel Camus, one of the "new wave" of French directors who, at 47, is the Ancient of that group. His *Black Orpheus*, winner of the Cannes Golden Palm, although it is ostensibly acted in a conventional way, is in essence a danced film. Those who saw this in *Modern Times* – in which every movement and gesture was molded rhythmically by Chaplin, who always dances, and by Paulette Goddard, who seemed never to touch her heels to the ground – will recognize it here. The basic concept of Camus' film is the idea (in the Platonic sense) of movement.

Because the picture's background is the annual carnival in Rio de Janeiro and because the story deals with the Negroes of that city, to whom dance is as natural as song-speech is to orthodox Jews, there is also a great deal of formal dancing of many kinds: cha-cha or samba or improvisation. But this only sets the outward seal on a film which, even when it is dealing with the daily life, flirtations, and fears of its characters, couches them in super-normal, musically attuned motion.

The use of the Rio carnival as a setting is excellent, though not completely original. (If memory serves, Orson Welles was making a carnival film there about fifteen years ago when he was discharged by the new management at RKO and the film was shelved.) An entire city in rhapsody is a provocative environment for a picture; in it Camus has placed a modern version of an old legend. The two leading characters are named, with disarming straightforwardness, Orpheus and Eurydice. The legend is distorted: the bulk of the picture deals with their courtship and love and only in the vaguest way touches the most important part of the legend – the chance to restore the dead girl. In straining for the atmosphere of myth, the script scants motivation (Why is the character in the Death costume pursuing Eurydice?) and forces in a pat way the death of the hero.

But despite this strain, despite adduced poetical touches, the film is often beautiful, a swirl of color and music and movement almost from first to last. The story is simply an excuse for the presentation of the milieu. The cast is all-Negro, most of them Brazilian non-professionals; Orpheus is a local football player. The only foreigner is the Eurydice, Marpessa Dawn, a beautiful American dancer.

None of the acting is worth discussion and the Eastmancolor is, as usual, somewhat below Technicolor quality; but the picture is worth seeing. The effect is of visual music.

I went with perhaps understandable misgivings to a film called *Hound-Dog Man* starring a teen-age singing idol named Fabian, and was agreeably surprised. Like *The Voice of Bugle Ann*, it concerns the hunters-by-hound of eastern Texas and Oklahoma and Arkansas. In it a young hunter, the lovable bachelor scamp of the vicinity, takes an adolescent boy and his younger brother on a hunting trip; and in scenes in woods, the cooking of fresh-caught fish over the fire, the camping at night, the picture creates an easy, bucolic, Huck Finn feeling. It is sometimes held of Americans that they are always searching for a lost boyhood they never really had. The outdoor episodes of this film symbolize that dream image, if such it be, with nice affection.

As the hero-worshipping adolescent, Fabian behaves himself agreeably and refrains from singing overmuch. As the hero, Stuart Whitman, who continues to reveal himself as an actor of capability and attraction, conveys warmth and comradeship and genuine love of the free life he leads. Carol Lynley is acceptable as the girl who finally hooks him but promises, as women will, not to shackle him.

There are numerous false Hollywood touches in the indoor scenes, from the acting to the makeup and lighting. But the hunting sequences are very pleasant and the dialogue is in the vein of rural America: the dry, companionable tease. If you are not deterred by the knowledge that there is copious country drinking throughout, here is a film to which you can take your children, which they will enjoy and which will not bore you. STANLEY KAUFFMANN

# *Correspondence*

Epistle to the Columbians

*Sirs:*

Below the surface gentility and charming paternalism of Hans Morgenthau's "Epistle to the Columbians" (December 21) lies a hard core of ethical absolution which may be destructive of liberal values. While *New Republic* readers will probably commend his plea for outspoken unorthodoxy and will perhaps agree with his contention that the dismissal of Charles Van Doren was proper, some might feel disturbed by his ad-



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vocacy of the "moral law," a position he arrives at by careful over-generalizing. For example, he fails to point out 1) that palpable differences exist between Plato, Buddha, and the Catholics Pascal and Aquinas, differences which do not justify the identity Morgenthau attempts to make among their moral pronouncements; 2) that no two generations even in the western world have committed themselves to the same (or sometimes even to similar) interpretations of the Ten Commandments; and 3) that one is just as correct in attributing "the foundation for our moral life" to Roman jurisprudence as to Judaic-Christian theology. There exists a strong body of anthropological, sociological, psychological, and semantic evidence which suggests that the "objective, immutable truth" which Morgenthau extols is impossible or meaningless; that, on the contrary, the conception of the moral law as "a utilitarian instrument aiming at the protection of society" which he attacks is precisely that which has led to such relativity-based consequences as humane penal laws, religious tolerance, and political liberalism. His thesis was in fact presented more concisely, although less eloquently, on page 19 in the excerpt from *The National Review*; like the editors of that journal Hans Morgenthau seems to prefer the dichotomy between Good Guys and Bad Guys to the less simple but perhaps more liberal recognition of Problems.

*Charles S. Blinderman*
*Southern Illinois University*
*Carbondale, Ill.*

*Sirs:*

Half way through "Epistle to the Columbians" it dawned on me that the membership and morals of the Columbia University Board of Trustees must have changed greatly between the hiring of Dwight D. Eisenhower as President of that institution and the dismissal of Van Doren from its faculty.

*William R. Bigler*
*Columbus, Ohio*

*Sirs:*

Morality appears to be an open book to Professor Morgenthau. It is not so for many – *e.g.*, for Whitehead – "What is morality in any given time or place? It is what the majority then and there happen to like, and immorality is what they dislike. But [searching questions] applied to morals would open the way to a discovery of the few ultimacies behind all systems of morals, a region in which very little has as yet been done."

If, as the Professor says, "the students have lost vital contact with the transcendence of the moral law," is it possible that Columbia bears some responsibility? And along the same line of thought, might the reluctance of individual students to give their names reflect the moral milieu of their university?

*Aaron Levy*
*Winsted, Conn.*

*Sirs:*

Professor Morgenthau has lifted our spirits with his *Epistle to the Columbians* (December 21). When the stench of the occasion which prompted it has gone from the nostrils, and the public's hunger for miracles and similar escapes is pandered to by other gimmicks, as it has been from Paul's day and before, the Epistle may well stand as a classic of its kind. But teachers everywhere might use it now, while the occasion is vivid, to push home the lesson of individual responsibility. No, I don't for a minute believe we are too far gone.

*Joseph Cottler*
*Elkins Park, Penna.*

## Church and State

*Sirs:*

As a regular reader of Gerald W. Johnson's *The Superficial Aspect*, I was happy to see him against birth control as a campaign issue ("Defend the Cheese Mines," December 14). What disappointed me was his use of the word "meddle" in warning us that "the nation is heading for trouble," when assorted bishops and clerics "meddle with political affairs." The issue of church and state is much too important to be absorbed in such a sponge-like word. When does a clergyman meddle with politics? Can Mr. Johnson enlighten us?

Does a clergyman have the right to run for public office? To endorse a candidate for public office, *e.g.*, in a newspaper advertisement? To endorse a political candidate from the pulpit?

Does he have the right to accept appointment to a public body, *e.g.*, a fair employment commission or a public housing authority? To testify before a legislative committee in favor of a $1.25 minimum wage law? To testify in support of a proposal to close retail stores on Sunday? To write letters to his Senator on any of the above questions? To speak from his pulpit on any of these questions?

Does he have the right to criticize existing public policy, *e.g.*, the McCarran immigration act? To criticize the administration of foreign aid, *e.g.*, its underemphasis of technical assistance in some countries? To advocate federal scholarships for students in public and private schools?

Does he have the right to ask his congregation not to patronize a movie theater which shows Soviet films? To warn his congregation against certain publications which vilify Jews and Negroes? To denounce a white citizens' council which tries to subvert the Court decision against school segregation?

Does he have the right to call upon the governor of a state to discuss public policy? To call upon the president or one of his staff to advocate a certain diplomatic policy toward the Vatican or Israel? To teach in a state university? To serve as a conciliator on a state payroll? To issue public statements on controversial public issues?

Does it make any difference whether any of the above acts are taken by clergymen collectively, in small or large numbers? Does it make any difference if the group includes Protestant, Catholic and Jewish clergymen? Where would Mr. Johnson draw a line? Would he give to a clergyman all of the political rights, privileges and duties enjoyed by the lay citizen?

*Ed Marciniak*
*Chicago, Illinois*

*Sirs:*

What Gerald Johnson had to say about Senator Kennedy and the effect of his Catholicism on his efforts to obtain the Democratic nomination is good as far as it goes, but it hardly goes far enough. It ought to be pointed out that many groups other than Catholics are disadvantaged in seeking the Presidency. Among those left outside the tradition that the President must be a white Protestant male resident north or west of the Confederate states are (a) Southerners, (b) women, (c) Jews, (d) Negroes and other persons of color, and (e) agnostics and members of a variegated assortment of religious sects. . . .

I do not know how successful Senator



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Kennedy will be in his effort. I do know, and we are fortunate that this is so, that there are other Catholics equally qualified. I would be glad to vote for Senator Mansfield of Montana or Senator McCarthy of Minnesota for any office, content that they would serve their country with ability and devotion. The same thing can be said about a number of Catholic governors. But need we stop there in breaking political barriers which may one day serve to deprive us of the services of the exact person needed to lead us to a high destiny?

*Charles Alldredge*
*Washington, D. C.*

## All Deliberate Speed

*Sirs:*

The unrestrained optimism of your lead editorial "Thaw in the South" (December 1) is hardly supported by the statistics on school desegregation. You write that "nearly 2.5 million white, and somewhat more than one-half million Negro children were no longer segregated." . . . But if one looks at the Report of the US Commission on Civil Rights it is apparent that only 216,000 Negro children have enrolled in desegregated schools. Even this figure may be misleading, since it includes six border states and the District of Columbia. If we exclude these border areas, the situation is dismal. Not a single Negro child has been "desegregated" in Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi and South Carolina. In five other states – Arkansas, Florida, North Carolina, Tennessee and Virginia – the total number of such Negro children is about 250. Only in Texas are a sizeable number – 3,750 – attending bi-racial schools.

Even the rate of desegregation has dropped precipitously. As the Commission on Civil Rights points out, in the first school year after the Supreme Court decision of May 17, 1954, 154 school districts initiated a desegregation program. In the next two years, the figures were 297 and 248. But in the 1957 and 1958 school years the figures had plummeted to 61 and 37. At the 1958 rate, it will take 50 years before all of the bi-racial school districts of the South have even begun a desegregation plan.

You comment that "massive retaliation against desegregation has been repudiated." It was not repudiated; it was broken by the Supreme Court. But there has been no real change of heart. The South has merely shifted to a more effective and "legal" weapon, the pupil-assignment laws. It is these laws which are cynically relied upon to admit only a handful of Negro school children to "white" schools and thus stave off effective desegregation orders from the courts. These laws are not designed to effect a gradual movement from the segregated schools. They are merely a recognition that lip-service must be paid to the Supreme Court's mandate while delaying compliance indefinitely.

The South is far from thawing on the issue of desegregation and Congress will have to find means of compelling lagging school boards to eliminate their segregated school systems.

*Will Maslow, General Counsel*
*American Jewish Congress*
*New York, N. Y.*

In reply:

Our differences with Mr. Maslow are not over facts; they are over the significance of recent events. Obviously, there was bound to be a difference in rate of desegregation between the border areas and the "hard core" five states of the Deep South. Obviously, there is an anomaly in the present exception to the general legal assumption that when litigation has established the right of an individual in a given case, all individuals in the same situation are to be regarded as having the same right; but the Supreme Court, in allowing time for the acceptance of its school mandate, has considered the relation between law and consent, and we think it was necessary to do so.

We believe that the reversal of Virginia's doctrine of "massive resistance" last spring – a reversal, we would remind Mr. Maslow, that was effected by the state legislature, not by the Supreme Court – was an important turning point: defense of a general principle, in the state from which the Deep South has been taking its leadership, has now given way to case-by-case practicalities. We emphatically do not agree that the shift to pupil-placement laws is a shift "to a more effective and 'legal' weapon"; neither do we think that Mr. Maslow is accurate in suggesting that our description of these laws and their probable effects falls in the category of "unrestricted optimism." THE EDITORS

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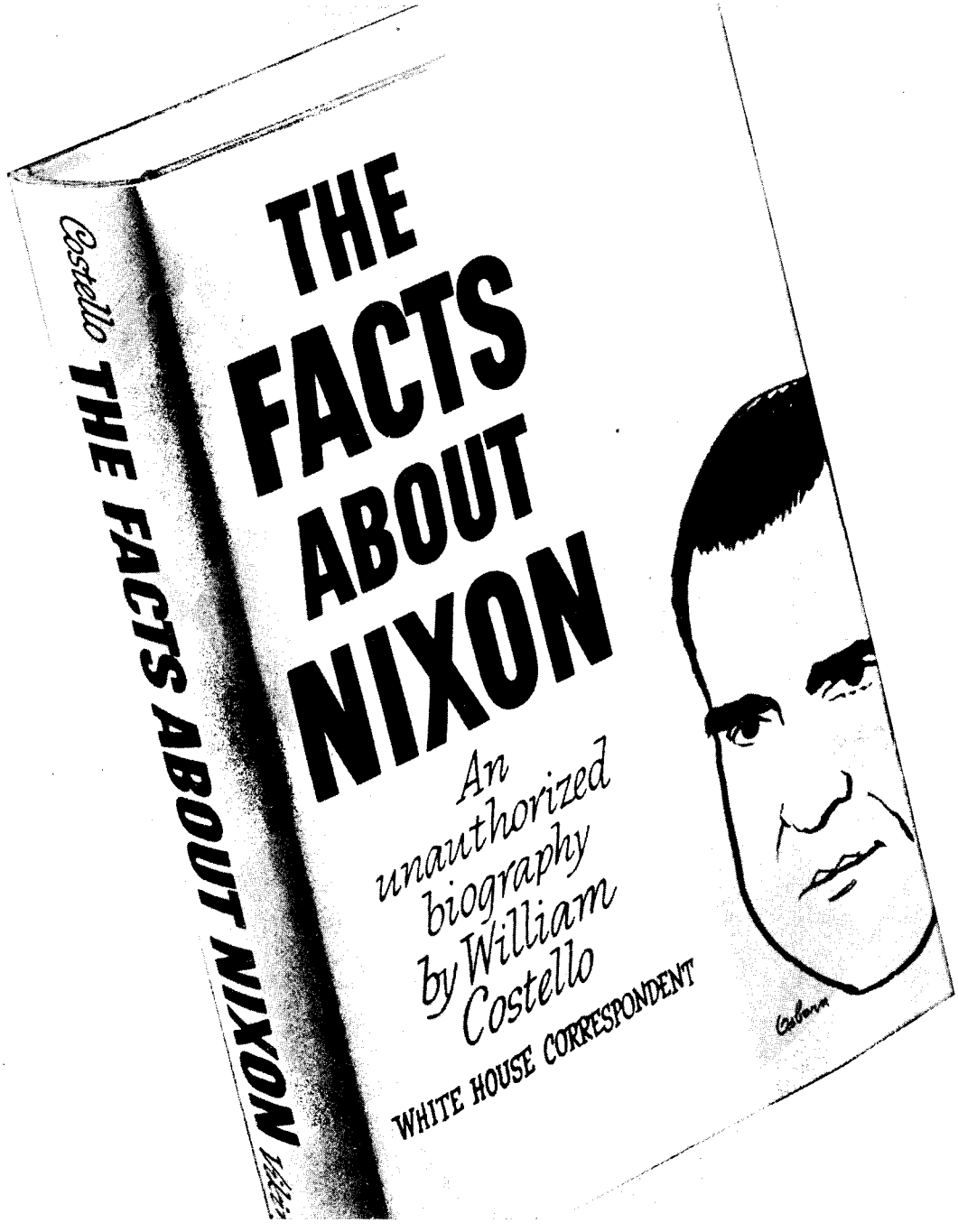
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